

EMERGENCY NEWS FROM THE STATE OF WASHINGTON

State Emergency Operations Center, Camp Murray, Washington
Emergency Management Division, Washington Military Department

For immediate release

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State EOC increases activation level for Mount St. Helens

CAMP MURRAY, WA—The State Emergency Operations Center (EOC) elevated its activation level at 12:26 p.m. today as part of increasing the readiness of state government in response to the noontime volcanic activity at Mount St. Helens. Washington state's role is to monitor the situation and support any local government requests for assistance should a response to the situation be required. Gov. Gary Locke's office was immediately informed of the change in Mount St. Helens activities.

The State EOC was elevated to a Phase III activation level from the Phase II level it had been at since Sept. 29 due to Mount St. Helens activity. One action triggered by a Phase III activation is that key state agencies will send representatives to the State EOC where they will monitor the situation and stand ready to fill any requests for assistance from local jurisdictions. The State EOC continues to maintain regular contact with the U.S. Geological Survey, U.S. Forest Service, and county and state agencies.

Mount St. Helens activity is not projected to threaten life or property, members of the public may want to update their emergency plans. Information about preparing for emergencies is available at www.emd.wa.gov. To locate a *Volcanic Ashfall* brochure, go to that website and click publications, then videos.

Additional note to the public:

The State Enhanced 911 Office in cooperation with local telephone carriers reminds all citizens in the affected area:

- To stay off the telephone unless you have a critical need to make a telephone call. Remember a FAX or a computer also uses a telephone line and may affect your ability to get immediate help in a life-threatening emergency.
- DO NOT call 9-1-1 unless you need an emergency response from police, fire or emergency medical personnel.
- If you experience other types of problems not related to these emergency services, call the appropriate telephone number for those services.
- DO NOT call 9-1-1 unnecessarily. 9-1-1 lines must be kept open for true emergencies.
- If you pick up your telephone to make a call and do not hear dial tone, DO NOT HANG UP. Simply wait a few seconds, and you will get dial tone and be able to make your call.

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Members of the media may call the Washington Emergency Information Center at (800) 688-8955.
EDITORS: Do not release the media phone number to the public. It is for *media use only*.